DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION REPORT

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1. COUNTRY: ARGENTINA (AR)

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3. TITLE: ARGENTINE-U.S. BILATERAL COMMUNICATIONS RELATIONSHIP

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14. SOURCE: Embassy telegram 2405

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15. SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:

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16. SUMMARY:

Report forwards Amembassy telegram 2405, DTG 271901Z MAR 79 concerning Argentine-U.S. Bilateral Communications relations. The report describes Argentine cultural heritage and values. Attitudes held by decision-makers and interest group leaders are included. Government format in Argentina is compared with similar functions in the U.S. Influence of travel to the U.S. on Argentines is described as a positive factor in bilateral relations. The horizontal and vertical extent of an on-going dialog between the U.S. and Argentina is noted. A survey of communication access to university and legal leaders is included as are issues and concerns for improved relations.

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20. ENCLOSURES:

1 Enclosure
1. Amembassy telegram 2405, DTG 271901Z MAR 79, 1 cy, 7 pgs (U)

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21. This IR contains 1 pages.

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2405
271901Z MAR 79

TELEGRAM

INDICATE
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FROM: AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
CLASSIFICATION: UNCLASSIFIED

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BILATERAL COMMUNICATIONS RELATIONSHIP - CPP

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UNCLASSIFIED BUENOS AIRES 2405

USICA FOR AR

(b)(3):10 USC 424

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1. Although relations between Argentina and the United States have been marked occasionally by varying degrees of tension, the nations have much in common. Conversely, there are real and basic differences between them. For instance, Argentina's political and juridical development, despite formal modeling in part on U.S. forms, has been primarily influenced by its predominately European heritages including the Napoleonic code. Notably, even when well-versed in the techniques of American democracy, many Argentines do not clearly perceive the nature of the values that create a stable political process and a tradition of respect for the rule of law. Moreover, Argentine right-wing nationalists, both military and

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OPTIONAL FORM 153
(Formerly FS-413)
January 1975
Dept. of State

civilian, have rejected liberal democratic notions as weak and dangerous. Many see in recent U.S. history (Vietnam, détent, Watergate, even SALT) not enlightened realism but signs of a lack of will and the morale fiber requisite of a true world leader.

2. Virtually all Argentines and notably the military Government and its - old ~~and~~ oligarchy ~~supporters~~ supporters, mainly the ~~industrial~~ industrial-agricultural-business complex, resent U.S. interference in what they firmly believe to be domestic matters (currently best illustrated by our human rights policy). They consider U.S. military and economic sanctions as a betrayal of our own not-too-distant-past emphasis on anti-communism and their self-proclaimed war on Marxist subversion. Fearing social and economic chaos, the greater part of the public has supported, even admired the military in its tough drive to end the killings, ~~subversion~~ subversion and kidnappings which were literally tearing Argentina apart in early 1976. At the same time, many fault U,S. policy for its apparent hypocrisy in~~x~~ selective applying human rights judgments around the world.

3. Behind all of this, Argentine society and culture tends always toward centralization of power and emotional reactions to problems in ~~sharp~~ sharp contrast to the U.S. emphasis on pragmatic problem solving but greatly decentralized power. In Argentina this has meant an historical

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absence of consensus and the well-known Argentine "Social Anarchy". Argentines admit they live in one of the world's most blessed countries and, since they have proven to themselves over decades that they can not organize their own political or economic chaos, they have become self-deprecating. They admire, even envy a bit, U.S. and European modern ways yet they feel themselves "not ready yet" for "today" (socially, culturally, academically or politically). Confronted with U.S. paternalism (however disguised), the average Argentine resorts to a nationalism based on a misture of justified pride and a deep inferiority complex.

4. On the asset side of the ledger, there is a large and well-placed number of Argentines who have studied, trained or lived in the U.S. There is a tempered admiration for the U.S. educational dream and, to a lesser degree, the system. U.S. technological and scientific achievements are openly praised and applauded. There exists a well-educated, well-read, somewhat worldly and highly articulate public on every Mission theme of mutual interest. These people are approachable and well aware that solutions to

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their problems are not available in Argentina alone. In short, U.S. and Argentine ends are really not that different. Our means to achieve those ends start from a very different culture/social base and follow divergent courses along the way toward opposing policies and actions.

5. Yet, a serious dialog has been opened -- not only in in camera discussions involving the Ambassador and other high ranking U.S. officers with the highest level GOA officials but also, importantly, with major institutions of public diplomacy. The U.S. positions on basic issues have been made known to great numbers of Argentines -- many of whom support (albeit silently) the humanity and morality of the U.S. approaches. These groups include, significantly, some military officers, labor leaders, lawyers, judges, media professionals, scientists, intellectuals and politicians, especially those with some personal exposure to American life and people.

6. The Mission, in face of declining U.S. programs in Argentina, places emphasis on a combination of persuasive diplomacy and a thoroughly integrated public diplomacy arm.

7. Post has good access to the print and radio media and some access to television. Although the press strongly supports the Government to the point

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of easily accepting self-censorship, it has firmly defended freedom of the press and regularly denounces government incursions against [redacted] that principle.

8. Large numbers of judges and lawyers, having backgrounds that enable them to overcome cultural stereotypes that impede wider Argentine understanding of the nature of American political values, are also a valued and accessible asset.

9. The once lively academic scene is unnaturally quiet and politically and intellectually neutered. The universities -- not for the first time -- have been thoroughly purged after the military takeover. Those in or just behind power blame "Marxist infiltration" on campuses for causing the battle against subversion to be in too many cases a conflict against their own children. Under present conditions, U.S. academics are loath to come to Argentina although there is no suggestion that American professors are "boycotting" the country.

10. Notwithstanding the ups and downs in recent bilateral relations, the Binational Fulbright Commission has continued to function well as a vehicle for enhancing mutual understanding.

11. Finally, Third-World, Peronist, nationalistic and autarkic economic theories and philosophies abound [redacted]

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and are strongly held by many Argentines. Argentina is caught in a strange paradox economically. Abroad, its tough, harsh, firm monetary and fiscal policies are welcomed and applauded as the only way back from bankruptcy despair three years ago. Internally, these same policies are little understood and thoroughly hated. U.S. pats on the back for having held firm are most often viewed as misinformed naiveté or misguided as plots to keep Argentina dependent on Uncle Sam.

12. Issues and Concerns:

1. The seeking of enhanced observance of political and civil rights and the related goal of eventual return to democratic institutions are of primary importance. (GORM RELATED)

2. U.S. human rights policy must come to be seen as a defense of historic values essential for the development of democracy in Argentine Government or framework. (GORM RELATED)

3. U.S. nuclear non-proliferation policy needs to be understood as designed to protect world security and the world environment. Argentine acceptance of the honesty of the U.S. policy would open the door to U.S. assistance that would accelerate Argentine

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nuclear development. (GORM RELATED)

4. It should be stressed that an increase in bilateral trade and cooperation in the formation of sound international economic policies is the mutual interest of Argentina and the United States. (GORM RELATED)

5. The strategic importance of Argentinean water ways as well as Argentina's role in the regional balance of power are issues of long-range importance. (GORM RELATED)

6. Fostering of soundly-based commonalities on and acceptance of the objectivity of U.S. initiatives in multilateral fora is an issue of on-going significance. (GORM RELATED)

7. The United States needs to demonstrate that it recognizes and admires the many accomplishments of Argentine Society and seeks meaningful interchange on a person-to-person and institution-to-institution basis with Argentina to their mutual edification and advantage of both peoples.

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